ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A "digital item" is defined as a data structure configured to function as a fundamental unit of manipulation of multimedia data in the electronic commerce environment. The digital item includes an atomic digital item which is a data structure called component, which is not further divided, and a packaged digital item data structure. The packaged digital item is generated in a recurrent manner using atomic digital items or already packaged digital items. The packaged digital item includes two levels of data structure called an item and a container. The component includes a resource, such as audio, video, graphic, text, etc., an anchor for designating the resource, a descriptor for describing the resource, a murCondition as information on management and use rule conditions for the resource, an opCondition as information on operational use conditions of the resource, an eventReport for describing an event to be reported in connection with the resource, a userPreference for describing user preference information on the resource, and a reservedMetadata as metadata additionally required for a future digital item definition model. The item is provided in a packaged form of a higher layer than the component and includes any component or sub item. The container is provided in a packaged form of a higher layer than the item and includes any item or sub container.